



APPROVED

**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
May 26, 2009
City Hall
250 Hamilton Ave**

Commissioners Present: Pat Markevitch, Carl King, Deirdre Crommie, Joel Davidson, Sunny Dykwel, Paul Losch, Daria Walsh,

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Liaison Espinosa

Staff Present: Greg Betts, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Donald Piana, Lester Hodgins

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: None

II. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

IV. BUSINESS:

1. **Approval of Draft Minutes of April 28, 2009 regular meeting** – The Draft Minutes of the April 28, 2009 regular meeting were approved as written. **Approved 4:3(Commissioners Davidson, Crommie, Walsh absent during the business item)**
2. **Recreation Summer Camps and Aquatics Program Update Presentation**– Staff de Geus introduced Annie Buntin, Program Coordinator for Recreation Aquatic programs. Ms. Buntin provided the Commissioners with a presentation on the summer camps and aquatic programs available to residents and non residents of Palo Alto. Commissioners were given an opportunity for questions and answers.
3. **Cardiac Therapy Program Presentation**– Mr. Joe Hirsch Chair of the board of the Cardiac Therapy program introduced the main players of the program, Vice Chair Mr. Carl Thompson and member of the program Judge Phelps and the Director of the program Robin Wedell. Ms. Wedell provided information to the Commission on how the program works. They wanted to share this information so the City has background information



aiding them in their decision of how they will reallocate their gym space use when the JCC moves out.

4. **Overview of the Open Space Rangers Staff and Program Presentation** – Staff Piana introduced Staff Hodgins who provided the Commissioners with a candid view of the staff involved in keeping the Open Space Nature Preserves in the great shape they are in. There was time given to the Commission for questions and answers.
5. **Discussion on holding a community meeting on dog recreational issues** – Commissioner Losch reviewed the memo provided to the Commissioners on the dog issues in Palo Alto. The four primary issues that Commissioners Walsh and Losch agreed upon were:
 1. Dogs in Foothills Park. A review of the current regulations that allow dogs (on leash) in the park on week days, but not on week ends.
 2. The potential to add or expand dog runs in Palo Alto
 3. The possibility of designating certain area in certain parks as “dog havens” at certain times of day (analogous to a practice in Menlo Park.)
 4. The status of the leash law that was passed in the 1950’s and is violated on a regular basis throughout the City.

The Commission was asked for comments and any changes to these issues. Staff Betts provided the Commission with his knowledge of how the City Menlo Park handles “dog havens”. Staff Piana also added that he found out that it would take a vote of 2/3 to amend the leash law.

Oral Communications

Herb Borock, PA – Passed out copies of the Task Force on Dog Issues that was discussed by the Commission in March of 2008. Mr. Borock would like to see closure on the dog issue.

Staff and the Commission discussed various ways to reach the public on these issues. Some of the ideas discussed were: surveys, public meetings, and the open city hall that you have to register for that will have a question that the council would like feed back on.

Commissioner Losch would like to have an action item at the next meeting to agree on how to reach the public on these issues. Council Liaison Espinosa commented that it would be helpful to think about what the Commission would like to see come out of whatever mechanism is used to gather feedback from the public.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Library Commission could not get a quorum so it was decided to not have a joint meeting but the three Chairs were going to meet.

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2. The City Council did not vote on the Foothill Fire Management Plan, they want the Parks and Recreation Commission to reevaluate the ecological concerns that were brought up.
3. May Fete had a good turn out even though it rained.

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR JUNE 23, 2009 REGULAR MEETING:

1. Draft Gymnasium Allocation Policy, review and possible approval to recommend to Council – Action – Rob de Geus/Kathy Espinosa Howard
2. Friends of the Palo Alto Parks, Universal Playground Proposal – review and possible approval to recommend to Council – Action – Don Piana/Olenka Villarreal
3. Mitchell Park Library Community Center Project Update and Review – Discussion – Group 4 Architects/Rob de Geus
4. Recommendation of mechanism of soliciting feedback on dog issues in Palo Alto – Action – Losch/Walsh

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Dykwel and seconded by Commissioner Davidson
Adjourned at 9:10pm